

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-10 COME-00

EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 NIC-01 OC-06 CCO-00 DRC-01 /170 W

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P R 101530Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3598

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0717

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, LU

SUBJ: OCTOBER 9 WORK STOPPAGE

1. ON OCTOBER 9 LUXEMBOURG'S LARGEST LABOR UNION, THE LAV (LETZEBURGER ARBECHTER-VERBAND) ORGANIZED A 24-HOUR WORK STOPPAGE AND DEMONSTRATION DESIGNED TO ATTRACT ATTENTION TO THE UNION'S DEMANDS FOR IMPROVED SOCIAL LEGISLATION, HEALTH AND FISCAL BENEFITS FOR THE WORKERS, LOW COST HOUSING AND A HIGHER GUARANTEED MINIMUM WAGE. AN ESTIMATED 25,000 PERSONS, OR 35 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S INDUSTRIAL WORK FORCE, TOOK PART IN A MASS MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG CITY, AND THE STEEL INDUSTRY REPORTED THAT 75 PERCENT OF THE WORK FORCE STAYED AWAY. PREDICTABLY LAV LEADERS CLAIMED THAT THIS LARGE TURNOUT ENCOURAGED THE UNION IN ITS ACTION AND LAV ANNOUNCED THAT ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL STUDY RESULTS OF WORK STOPPAGE AT MEETING ON OCTOBER 12. NATIONAL LAV CONFERENCE IS PLANNED TO BE HELD IN JANUARY OR FEBRUARY 1974 WHERE THE UNION WILL DISCUSS OTHER ACTIONS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT IF THEIR

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DEMANDS ARE NOT MET. PRIME MINISTER WERNER ANNOUNCED

THAT THE WORK STOPPAGE FAILED TO ATTRACT THE EXPECTED SUPPORT AND HE AGAIN WARNED THE UNIONS NOT TO DISRUPT THE SOCIAL CLIMATE WHICH HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF NUMEROUS FOREIGN INDUSTRIES IN THE PAST BARS.

2. BEFORE THE WORK STOPPAGE THERE HAD BEEN SOME TALK OF PROSECUTING THE LAV LEADERS, NAMELY PRESIDENT MATHIAS HINTERSCHIED AND SECRETARY GENERAL ANTOINE WEISS, FOR LEADING AN "ILLEGAL STRIKE", BUT SINCE THE DEMONSTRATIONS TOOK PLACE IN ATMOSPHERE OF COMPLETE CALM, AND PRIME MINISTER WERNER HAD TOLD US THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO MAKE "MARTYRS" OUT OF THE UNION LEADERS, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT ANY CHARGES WILL BE FILED. POLICE AND GENDARMERIE UNITS WERE DEPLOYED AROUND DEMONSTRATION AREA AND LEADING PLANTS, INCLUDING US FACTORIES, BUT THEY INTERVENED ONLY TO HANDLE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS IN DOWNTOWN LUXEMBOURG RESULTING FROM MARCH THROUGH CITY STREETS.

3. A CHECK WITH THE LEADING AMERICAN INDUSTRIES SHOWS THAT MOVEMENT ATTRACTED LESS SUPPORT IN US PLANTS THAN ELSEWHERE. WHERE THE LAV NOT PRESENT IN US PLANTS, THERE WAS NO SYMPATHY MOVE AMONG NON-UNION WORKERS TO PARTICIPATE IN MOVEMENT. GOODYEAR, WHICH IS LARGEST AMERICAN FIRM AND IS ORGANIZED BY LAV, REPORTS THAT ROUGHLY 15 PERCENT OF WORK FORCE, AND ONE THIRD OF LAV MEMBERSHIP AT MAIN TIRE PLANT PARTICIPATED IN WORK STOPPAGE. GOODYEAR FURTHER REPORTS THAT WHILE TIRE PRODUCTION SLOWED DUE TO WORK STOPPAGE, MINIMUM REQUIRED DAILY OUTPUT WAS NEVERTHELESS EXCEEDED ON OCTOBER 9.

4. FURTHER DETAILS AND ANALYSIS FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM. FARKAS

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